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ABSTRACT

This guide explains how adult and community education (ACE) providers across Great Britain can engage black learners in ACE by making their learning programs relevant, challenging, and appropriate to adult learners from black and minority groups. The following topics are discussed: (1) the importance of engaging black and minority learners in ACE; (2) terminology; (3) institutional racism; (4) ACE's role in eradicating racism and valuing diversity; (5) getting started by understanding the community and its needs; (6) ACE practitioners' legal responsibilities stemming from the 1976 Race Relations Act; (7) working in partnership; (8) developing a meaningful curriculum; (9) strategies for sustainability; (10) ensuring that what is offered is needed; (11) minding program quality and measuring program impact; and (12) sharing information about successful programs. Thirteen good practices, including the following, are presented: (1) identify currently available ACE opportunities; (2) become aware of the social and educational issues facing many black people in Great Britain; (3) help black people define themselves in ways they deem appropriate; (4) promote equality and cultural diversity; (5) seek to develop an inclusive curriculum celebrating diversity; and (6) engender a critical awareness for practitioners and learners. A glossary and lists of references/resources, contacts and networks, and useful World Wide Web sites are included. (MN)

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Lenford White

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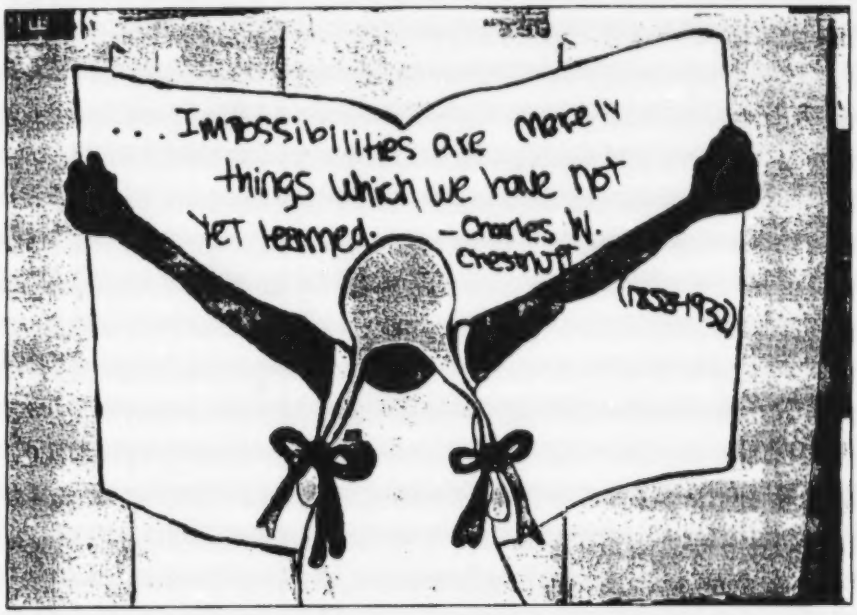
Note to the reader:
Black is used as a short-hand term to describe people who are black or from minority groups. See 'Don't let terminology get in the way', pages 4–7.
Inspirations: refer to case studies and examples of good practice.
Glossary: the meanings of words underlined in the text can be found in the glossary on pages 36–39.



"...Impossibilities are merely things which we have not yet learned."
Charles W. Chestnut (1858-1832)
From mural on Malcolm X Boulevard, Harlem, August 2001

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1 Why does it matter?

Within mainstream education academic success is closely related to what is taught, who is teaching it and what the teacher expects of the learner. Arguably the same holds true in adult and community learning (ACL). The last thing that ACL providers want to do, having managed to encourage learners to have a second go, is to reinforce any of the negativism experienced the first time around. But ACL is not always a second chance to learn; it's often a first. For the adult learner it can also be a second chance to fail. What matters here is that ACL can provide a second opportunity for the teacher to unlock the potential of the learner.

The imperative to engage people who are black and from minority groups in formal and informal learning opportunities is of paramount importance in a policy context which aims to put those who have been disenfranchised in the driving seat. This is particularly the case with regard to neighbourhood renewal, which recognises that real change for those who live in our poorest communities and neighbourhoods – in which there is social exclusion, poverty, crime and poor health and housing conditions – will only happen if they are actively involved in finding solutions. Black people comprise a disproportionately large number of those who live in poverty. They should not have things done to them: rather they should be active participants.

Nowhere is the experience of 'being done to' better illustrated than in relation to research. Some of Britain's poorest communities are in inner city areas, areas that have experienced economic recession as traditional industries have either gone into decline or relocated. These areas have also experienced significant investment and a plethora of regeneration initiatives in the last 20-30 years, but little has happened to improve the lives of individuals and families. Districts like Toxteth in Liverpool, Moss Side in Manchester, Bute Town in Cardiff and St Paul's in Bristol have all witnessed significant interventions through various City Challenge and Task Force initiatives, Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) – and European Social Fund (ESF)-supported projects but to little effect. Toxteth is purported to be the most researched area in the whole of Western Europe, yet it is still the poorest with up to 35 per cent of its young people unemployed.

The Government's commitment to New Deal for Communities (NDC) also illustrates the importance of black people participating in neighbourhood renewal initiatives. In its original NDC guidance, the Government sets out its expectations with regard to race equality and participation, claiming that these are central to the

effective operation of NDC. A commitment to engaging local people, local businesses and voluntary and community organisations as partners and agents of change also means involving people who are black. Whilst those who live in poverty can experience high levels of crime, ill-health and unemployment, these are often compounded for black people by the added dimension of racism together with its nasty siblings prejudice and discrimination.

Against a backdrop of under-achievement black people rarely consider education beyond school as an inalienable right, but more often as an anticipated wrong, expecting an irrelevant curriculum and an alien environment. For many people education beyond school is rarely thought of as important at all when faced with more significant 'real-life' considerations such as, *'How am I going to stretch my benefit payments until next Monday?'*, *'Has the local council cleared the needles from the estate play area?'* and *'Is it safe to pick the children up from school today?'* In this context, the Education and Lifelong Learning Officer explaining at a public forum, for example, that *'education is the cornerstone of everything that you do. It's the foundation upon which you can build a brighter future'* is not always appreciated. However, Nelson Mandela observed in *Long Walk To Freedom* that *'Education is the great engine of personal development.'*

Life chances

In Britain today skin colour is one of the most significant determinants of an individual's life-chances. The term colour prejudice is often thought of as an old-fashioned term, having been replaced by racism, which describes discrimination and prejudice, based on a variety of factors such as language, religion and culture as well as physical appearance. But colour prejudice is still a useful way to describe the negative experiences that black people often have in Britain, as a result of their skin colour and the assumptions that are held in relation to it.

Restricted life-chances for black people are illustrated in a number of ways. Black people, generally speaking, are under-represented in professional occupations. In Britain only 2.5 per cent of teachers and education professionals are black or from minority groups (yet 7.5 per cent of unemployed education professionals are from these same groups). Conversely, there is an over-representation of black people in the service industries – for example as porters in hospitals and catering workers in airports and fast-food outlets.

Whilst it would be safe to expect that new residents might start off their working lives in the service industries with successive generations doing better, it is often people who have been in this country for several generations who still dominate the service sectors. In some parts of the country with well-established communities, of over 300 years in some instances, black people are yet to make it into the service industries.

What is the evidence?

Skin colour has a direct bearing on people's experiences and their quality of life and can be illustrated by data relating to home ownership, crime figures, racial attacks, likelihood of ill-health and expected lifespan.

- Overall African-Caribbean people are one and a half times as likely as whites, and Indian people twice as likely, to live in poverty
- People from black and minority groups are 50 per cent more likely to suffer from ill-health as compared with whites
- Indians are nearly a third more likely to be unemployed as their white counterparts, and Caribbean men and women twice as likely
- There are 250,000 incidents of racial violence every year, with one person in four from black/minority groups in fear of racist attacks.

Statistics show that over the last 30 years the numbers of people of African-Caribbean origin suffering from psychological illnesses such as schizophrenia are considerably higher than for their white counterparts.

This is an unexpected trend considering that the people who came to this country from the Caribbean since the Second World War to help Britain with its post-war economic recovery were well-adjusted, skilled and forward-looking individuals, who came with high expectations not only for themselves but also for their children. Statistically, such people should be least likely to suffer from psychological illnesses. The reality is that racism can have an adverse effect on an individual's state of mind and ability to function effectively.

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Don't let terminology get in the way

Terminology as it applies to the topics of race relations and cultural diversity is an issue of considerable importance, and one that cannot be overstated. This is particularly true when considering how best to engage black learners. It is often the case that a thoughtless turn of phrase, an inappropriate description or an insensitive reference can undo years of good work spent engaging and retaining black learners. Inappropriate use of language also sends a strong signal to the learner, informing them that the speaker has little experience and even less insight into the experiences and perspectives of black people.

Since the inappropriate use of language in this context is more often than not inadvertent, a number of relatively simple steps can be taken in order to avoid alienating learners. It is always best to call people what they prefer to be called. Most people accept being described as being either black or from a minority group. Do not make reference to race at all unless it is a specific topic under consideration, or is initiated by the learner.

An Imam in a local mosque, who told his congregation not to fill out the census form, highlighted the significance of race and terminology recently. He was offended by the term 'ethnic'. He took offence to this term because, he said, it implies heathenism and lack of religious commitment. Of course the reasons for including an 'ethnic classification' on census forms are clear enough but lack of sensitivity has meant that as a consequence there are significant sections of the British public who have not registered their personal details with the national census. It does not have to be that way. Within an educational context, the teacher has to get it right as there is rarely a second chance.

Even the term *race* is problematic as it contrives to differentiate between people on the basis of a concept, race, which is socially constructed. There is only one race, the human race. This is a very good starting point if good relations are to be developed between people of different cultural, religious and linguistic groups. But race is difficult to avoid: Race Relations Act, Commission for Racial Equality, Race Relations Policy.

We happily use the word 'racism'. How can there be racism if there is only one race? The answer is that racists believe that there are different races and, more than this, they apply a hierarchy based on notions of superiority and inferiority to the notion of race – believing black people to be inferior.

Words like ethnic are equally problematic, but are used non-problematically: black and ethnic minority group, ethnic classification, ethnic art/cookery/clothing, and so on. Think about the power of language and how inadequate the English language often is in describing cultural diversity. Putting a poster out into the black community saying, *'Are you lacking in basic skills? Are you from an ethnic minority? Would you like to take advantage of our services?'* will get a resounding 'no' every time, because you have not been mindful of your language.

The language of challenging racism and promoting cultural diversity is dynamic and ever-changing, so that phrases that were acceptable in the 1950s, 1960s, 1970s and 1980s are not necessarily acceptable in the 21st century. Words like 'coloured' and 'half-caste' are, for example, generally offensive to most people and if used can serve to alienate your potential learners/participants from the start. Yet they are still used in the 21st century.

An added complication to terminology as it applies to black people is that not everybody agrees as to what is appropriate; take the word 'black', for example. We are often confronted with phrases like 'black and Asian'. This is a problem for at least two reasons. Some Asians apply the term 'black' to themselves and whilst everyone has heard of Asia, and many know where it is, no one has heard of black land and nobody knows where it is. In the phrase 'black and Asian', a political consciousness is confused with a geographical location.

Conversely, non-white is often seen as an inappropriate term to describe people who are black and from minority groups, through it aims to be inclusive. Unfortunately, however, white is used as the normative standard against which everything else is measured. Within a world context 'non-black' would be more accurate. It is estimated that 85 per cent of the world population consists of 'people of colour'. This puts Eurocentrism into context.

Beyond black and minority?

The term black and minority group is not without its problems. Many people feel that it is time to move beyond black. The term was borrowed by people in Britain from the American Civil Rights movement in the 1960s, but black Americans no longer call themselves black: they are African-Americans, and proud of it. Similarly the word 'minority' is not always appropriate. Thirty-five per cent of the population of London is made up of people who are black and from minority groups and in a number of boroughs minorities are in the majority. This is also true of a number of areas in North Yorkshire, Bradford and Oldham. Leicester is purported to be the first city in Britain where minorities are in the majority.

So-called race-related terminology throws up more questions than there are answers, illustrating how complex an issue it is. The watchword is to be sensitive, find out what people prefer to be called and don't make too many assumptions.

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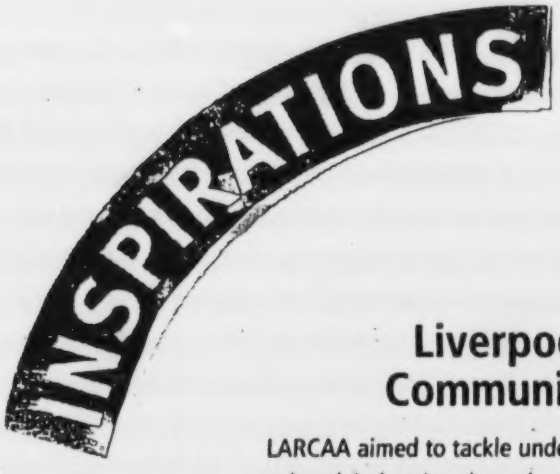


Liverpool Anti-Racist and Community Arts Association

LARCAA aimed to tackle under-representation of black people in the arts and cultural industries through a project funded by the European Social Fund 'Urban' initiative.

For 15 years LARCAA had built up a lot of experience in campaigning and advocacy work and as a black-led organisation had a lot of respect within the local community. LARCAA had recognised that art as a means of generating interest and as a way of exploring issues of race and cultural diversity was invaluable, so this became the logical starting point for engagement. Course providers were able to attract really hard-to-reach groups and encourage their participation in an area of learning that was largely alien to them.

LARCAA struggled with its match funding, but was able to draw on the in-kind support of seven local service providers. This enabled the 'draw-down' of cash from Urban in order to pay tutors, administrators and student support costs (childminding costs, transport, photography equipment and food).

For the black learners the biggest benefit from the project was in learning with people who had had similar experiences. This created solidarity and enabled them to see that they were not the problem. Photography in particular became a powerful means of expression, providing learners with a mechanism for 'letting go' of the past and moving on. And many have moved on to art foundation courses, into the media, onto photography course, and into employment, secure in their own abilities and more confident in their future.

Institutional racism

The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry provides a number of new definitions to old problems such as structural and organisational racism. The definition of institutional racism in the inquiry is particularly important in the context of adult and community learning. It enables us to see how racism operates as a by-product of the ways in which an institution or service organises itself culturally and how culture can act as a mechanism of exclusion for people who are black or from minority groups.

There's racism there, but not here! A straw poll

If you were to take a straw poll during a race relations training session with a group of relatively enlightened adult and community learning practitioners and the question was asked *'Is racism institutional within the British police force?'*, the odds are that a significant number of your audience would put their hand up to signify that it is. And this would be the right thing to do, given the evidence from the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry and the fact that the Metropolitan Police Force, by and large, agrees that there is a culture of racism within the British police. Ask the same audience whether racism is institutional within the organisations in which they work and within the services that they provide and most will keep their hand down, signifying that it is not. Why is this? Because for many people it is difficult to recognise that when it comes to racism, we are all part of the problem! However, the definition of institutional racism allows the individual to think about racism in broader terms. It refers to the way in which the institution operates that makes it racist, not necessarily by intent, but often in effect. Individuals happen to be a part of that organisation. But individuals are also part of the solution.

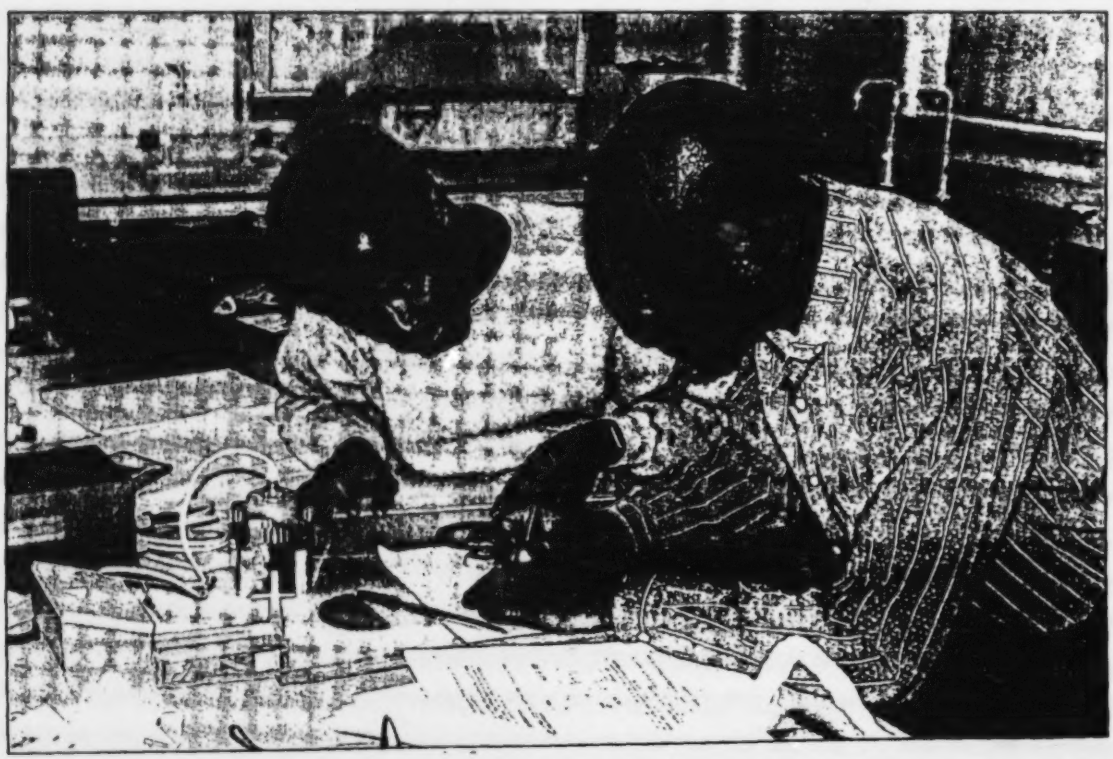
A simple definition of institutional racism is that racism is a problem within British society as a whole, having a bearing on the services that all adult and community learning providers offer. If institutions do not have policies and strategies designed to challenge racism and promote cultural diversity then they are institutionally racist.

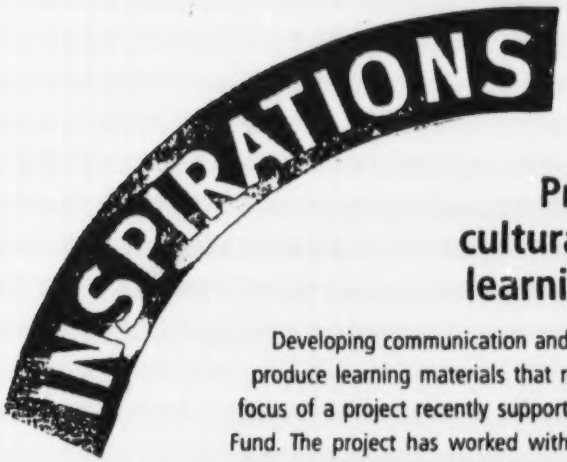
The following definition is arrived at by using the language of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry and applying it to education.

In the education system there are laws, customs and practices that systematically reflect and reproduce inequalities. If racist consequences accrue due to these laws, customs and practices, an ACL service or Local Education Authority is racist whether or not teachers and officers have racist intentions.

Educational establishments may systematically treat learners differently with respect to race. The differential treatment lies in some sense within the establishment's ethos and organisation rather than simply with the educators. This differential treatment is 'institutionalised' in the way the establishment operates.

A further source of institutional racism is our culture, the culture of educational establishments as a whole and the culture of each individual staff room. The occupational culture of adult learning services – because the majority of practitioners are white – tends to revolve around white experience, white beliefs and white values.





Producing culturally-sensitive learning materials

Developing communication and key skills by working with black learners to produce learning materials that reflect their cultures and backgrounds was the focus of a project recently supported through the Adult and Community Learning Fund. The project has worked with black and minority ethnic learners to produce culturally-sensitive materials for learning. Parents have identified resources used in their church and Saturday schools that are age-appropriate for adults and have introduced them to the college. College staff meet termly to review materials for racial and gender bias. Materials that are deemed to be inappropriate are withdrawn and discussed with black and minority ethnic learners in termly focus groups. These focus groups help to include the learners in decision-making but also establish good working relationships between staff and learners.

Classroom Assistant Project (CAP)

The CAP is delivered through the Elimu Academy to people who are black or from minority groups. The Elimu is a black-managed project supported by a number of trusts, foundations and partner organisations such as the Local Education Authority and the Community College.

In Liverpool it is estimated that there are 4,500 teachers, yet of this number only 35 are either black or from minority groups. Black youngsters have no role models and begin to think that education is not for them. Elimu sought funding in order to provide a classroom assistant project in the heart of the black community. Black assistants work in community schools as role models for the children as a first step towards accomplishing their major aim, which is to become qualified teachers.

The content of the course includes basic skills and key skills. The Elimu's philosophy is about providing facilities in order to improve numeracy and literacy and to overcome lack of confidence in these areas. Tutors work on a one-to-one basis. For students for whom English is an additional language there is support provided in language acquisition.

The informal curriculum at the Elimu is just as important as the more formal aspects of what is taught. Students work together, share problems and issues and help each other to overcome some of the phobias and reservations that they have about going into schools.

The CAP is in its third year. Eighty-eight per cent of students secured employment during 1999-2001. In total about 75 have been trained, with another 24 on course.

4 The importance of adult and community learning

Whilst further learning often feels irrelevant to those who have been initially excluded, it can be a liberating experience for those who have not been successful at school and not had their potential tapped and released. It can be the key to participation, self-actualisation and community activism and as the following case studies show there are many examples of good innovative projects that have provided a lifeline to many people, changing their lives forever.

"It's all about a 'yearning for learning', as one student put it to me. There's a pleasure in learning that's central to black culture. Schools have not necessarily tuned into this. There are kids who can make teachers weep, who when they find out what engages them, can't get enough. It's the same for black adults; a passion for finding out, for understanding, for getting control of new skills"
(Black teacher of adults)

"When I started my course I lacked confidence in many areas such as communication and computers. I had the opportunity of working with a friendly group of people. We gave support and encouragement to each other and best of all we become good friends both in and outside of the Academy. Through the Academy i gained the experience I needed to work in the education system. In July 2001 I graduated as a classroom assistant. I am presently employed in Kingsley Community School."
(Black student)

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"Our adult learners have not necessarily had bad experiences in school. Some are at colleges and some are quite active young people. One of the main concerns is that we know that the system fails black people, they don't get the same attention, a lot of young black people come from broken homes, family ties are missing so people go astray. We provide a positive sense of identity and good, progressive role models, and we encourage everyone to do well."
(Director of a community-based media charity)

"Community-based adult learning can be a liberating experience for black people. Through the courses I have managed I have seen students develop and grow and go onto great things. Adults are never too old to gain new skills and show a remarkable resilience in overcoming many of the horrendously negative experiences that they have had through schools."
(Community Development and Training Officer)

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"People who are black and from minority groups are the most disadvantaged and excluded within society. This is particularly true in poor communities such as Toxteth. Within a culturally diverse society you have to provide opportunities for all – there should be an action plan to deliver these opportunities. Our failure in the past determines that we have to make a change in the future. Adult and community learning can provide an opportunity to make good past failures. I have seen black students come to our centre timid and unaware of their own value and potential going on to make real differences as role models in schools for children. Most black students want to prevent youngsters from having the same experiences as themselves."
(Supplementary school teacher)

"Learning in our centre does a number of things; it helps parents to help their children, enables them to celebrate cultural events, provides a facility for a lot of people to meet each other. We eat together and people bring different offerings to share. Some come to the centre to practise their English. Often having been on a language course here students go onto the local college for further study. Most students can speak Arabic and Somali and they help each other, we also provide counselling and advice."
(Bilingual development worker)

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"Education has a key role to play in eradicating racism and valuing diversity. The government's acceptance of the recommendations of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report, published in 1999, reinforces this responsibility for all educational establishments, including those with few or no ethnic minorities."
(Commission for Racial Equality)

5 Getting started

There are some challenges involved at the outset, and a danger that intended initiatives will flounder if you decide on what to offer without any reference to potential beneficiaries. In deciding what to offer you should think about:

- What is relevant to people living locally
- How do I know?
- Are there national dimensions or implications to what I am proposing?
- What is in it for the learner?

Ask yourself, 'Am I the best person to provide this service?' This is a fundamental question, bearing in mind the issue of role models and the importance of having knowledge and understanding of community issues.

If the answer is no, find someone who is. If likely role models with appropriate skills are thin on the ground in your area think how to start building community capacity. In the meantime enlist the support of representative community members as necessary and pay them for their services.

- Find out if a mapping exercise has been carried out in order to establish what is being offered in the community. A good place to start will be through your Local Education Authority. Having had sight of your local Lifelong Learning Plan, you should be well placed to know if what you intend to deliver is needed.
- Support this information with intelligence gathered from the community with which you wish to work. This is essential since it may be that there are locally-based initiatives being offered to black people that do not feature in your LEA's plans.
- Talk to people in local drop-in and community centres; find out about their needs and aspirations.
- Do not underestimate the importance of the church. The church/mosque/cultural temple is both a community focus and an important place to develop partnerships.
- Work with your local council, particularly through its community development section (or equivalent), in order to identify databases and contact and distribution lists for mailing.
- Find out where best to deliver your services. This can be tricky as even within

small communities there are often territorial issues that you will be unable to solve in the short-term.

- Look to identify funding in order to deliver your service from more than one base if this is necessary.
- Establish what your local strategic and lifelong learning partnerships are doing and familiarise yourself with their action plans. This will make you better informed and well placed to identify any gaps.
- Get out into the community. Much of the work that you do with the black community will be based on trust – an essential prerequisite for engagement.
- Advertise your service well, familiarising yourself with the 'minority press' and other media such as radio.

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Your legal responsibilities

Your employers will have a range of responsibilities in accordance with various legislation, including the Race Relations Act. But such legislation has implications for you as a practitioner too. Be aware of legislation and if you think that there are opportunities to use it proactively discuss it with colleagues and managers.

The 1976 **Race Relations Act** protects the rights of people who are black and from minority groups and serves to ensure that no one is discriminated against on the basis of 'race, colour or creed'. The Act also places a duty on LEAs in particular (section 71) to:

- Eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
- Promote equality of opportunity and
- Promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

But race relations legislation is more than this, as it also enables service providers to be proactive and to take positive action. If monitoring reveals that some minority groups are under-represented in the workforce, public authorities can use positive action. This allows employers to target their job training and recruitment efforts at under-represented groups in a particular area of work, or in their workforce generally. Positive action can be a powerful tool, not only for redressing employment imbalances, but also in signalling to people who are black and from minority groups your commitment to equality of opportunity. Positive action is also about how a job is defined, where it is advertised, what to say in an advertisement and how to measure success in recruitment from local communities. Once you get to know black learners in the local community you will be well placed to advise and work with line managers on these issues.

If you are in a position to advertise a job, you might also consider if it is possible subject it to a Genuine Occupational Qualification (GOQ). Under section 52d of the Race Relations Act it is legally possible for an employer to advertise a job for which only members of certain groups can apply. If you were providing an ACL service for members of a Somali community and you wanted to employ a counsellor to support members who may be traumatised (through their experiences during the Somali civil war for example), then you could advertise specifically for a Somali person signifying that 'Somali people only need apply'.

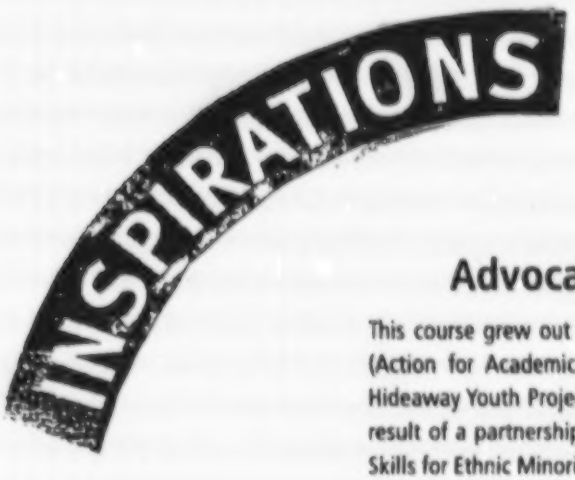
This, of course, makes good sense, as you would want to have the person

providing such services to have a knowledge and understanding of Somali culture, language and religion. The same section, 52d, could equally be applied to language assistants, pastoral workers, outreach workers and community consultants, though you should always contact your local Community Relations Council for advice.

What can we learn from Stephen Lawrence?

What can we take from the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry and apply to ACL? It is important to note that all the recommendations within the inquiry are directly aimed at the Metropolitan Police. Each recommendation does, however, have the caveat that it should also be applied to other relevant public bodies. As a practitioner you will be well placed in your teaching to:

- Ensure that what you deliver promotes cultural diversity
- Ensure that what you provide meets with the equality strands of the adult learning inspection framework
- Monitor provision, focusing on establishing the relationship between culture/family background and levels of achievement and retention
- Ensure that equality policies are implemented in your centre/service.
- Take on board the definition of institutional racism, assuming that it has been accepted by your line managers.



Advocacy Skills for Parents

This course grew out an 18-month period of working with the 3As (Action for Academic Achievement) parents' group, based at the Hideaway Youth Project, Moss Side in Manchester. The work was the result of a partnership between the group and the SRB project, Key Skills for Ethnic Minorities, based at Ducie Adult Learning Centre.

The course ran for six two-hour sessions on a Tuesday night. MAES, Manchester Adult Education Service, provided the venue and administrative support. Childcare costs, travel expenses and a refreshments budget were funded by a grant from M S and H Partnership. Contributors, who gave their expertise free of charge, included a deputy head teacher, an experienced high school classroom assistant, an officer from Save the Children and an adviser from Manchester School Improvement Service. The following topics were covered: "the role of the advocate", "the legal framework – schools' duties and parents' rights", "the school's perspective", "the role of the Local Education Authority" and "handling the interview – preparation and interview techniques". Sixteen people enrolled on the course and 13 completed and received an MAES certificate.

As a result of the course learners requested training in a range of areas including behaviour management, parenting skills, conflict resolution and how to support parents of children with challenging behaviour. In response to these ideas new courses are being planned.

"The information will empower me to make sensible approaches to supporting a family in an exclusion case".
(Black adult learner, Advocacy Skills for Parents)

Working in partnership

Every ACL opportunity that you make available to black adults should be developed as a result of clear thinking as to what is required and how this will be of benefit to the individual, the community and the economy. Such developments can only take place by forming democratic partnerships, established through a steering/working group.

Remember that a good partnership is one that reflects the interests of the range of people for whom you are seeking to provide services. Your partnership will include representatives from local organisations, the LEA , accrediting body (if appropriate) and organisations lending financial and in-kind support to what you are doing.

Apply the following questions to what you are intending to do focussing on *processes* as well as *outcomes*:

- Are you acting fairly with all groups in the local community giving all an equal chance to participate, as learners and as partnership members?
- Are you applying the same professional standard in every situation, treating individuals and groups from different cultures backgrounds with dignity and respect and aiming to meet their specific needs?
- What mechanisms are you using to disseminate information? Is it in appropriate community languages and is it in a language that everyone can understand?
- What mechanisms are you using for engagement? Are you encouraging openness and transparency through pubic meetings and forums?
- Are you recognising the unique skills that some of your learners have?
- Do you provide training, mentoring and role model initiatives?
- How are you building up the capacity of those who participate in your services?
- What evidence is there that you value wide and varied participation, and how is it reflected in your policies and planning?

"For some time, members of the 3As had been supporting and advising parents whose children were having difficulty at school. They often accompanied families to meetings at school to discuss incidents concerning the children. The group felt the need to share their experiences, pool their expertise and develop the advocate role through further training."
(Judy Craven, Ducie Project worker)

A meaningful curriculum

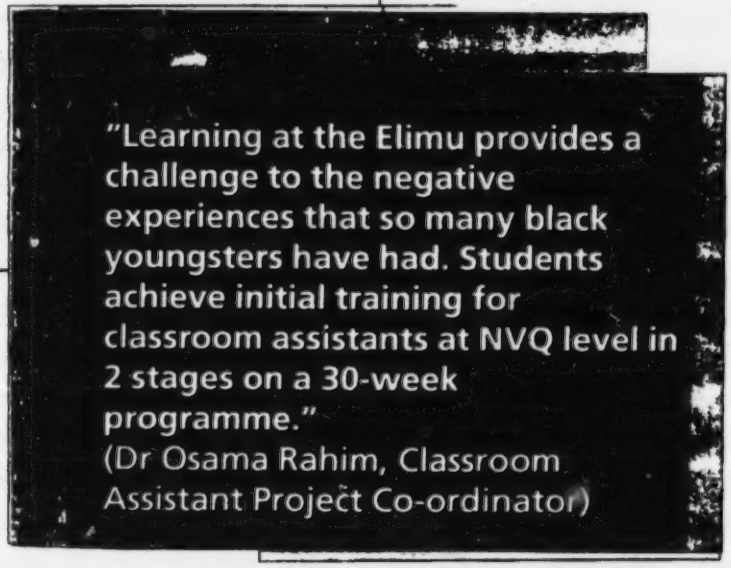
Take into account each and every learner when you begin to plan your curriculum. Remember that many learners will have had bad experiences in school and have found difficulty in seeing the relevance of the school curriculum due to the often Eurocentric nature of mainstream education. Also remember that your ultimate aim is to unlock the untapped potential of learners. Individual adult learners' needs require careful consideration and ACL service providers need to ask themselves:

- **Is what I am offering relevant?** Even if you are working with a prescribed curriculum, there will be opportunities to consider not only issues of 'race' and cultural diversity in the examples that you use, but also how you illustrate certain points.
- **Are teaching resources appropriate for the age and interest levels of learners?** There are, for example, sensitive issues when teaching English to speakers of other languages. Avoid using primary school materials and make sure that what you use reflects Britain as a culturally-diverse society.
- **What is the learning setting environment like?** This is a crucial point. Learners take a lot in when they enter new environments. What posters do you have on your walls? Is your learning setting welcoming? And are materials presented in appropriate community languages and in a positive way?
- **Are you building bridges?** There should be a relationship between the home, community and the learning setting. Creating detached experiences hinders learning. Think of ways of involving community members in the life of your centre/service, invite people in to talk to learners.
- **Who provides support in the learning setting?** Try to provide support in appropriate community languages and encourage your line managers to involve local assistants and teachers in your service if possible.
- **What budget provision are you making?** A well-planned and relevant curriculum requires a budget in order to resource it, so if you are applying for grants for new projects be careful to include 'specialist' books, resources and posters in your project proposals and remember that such resources are only expensive if the market is not encouraged. See it as your job to expand this market.
- **Take the opportunity to use local skills, experience and knowledge.** Apply these to what you are trying to do. If the resource that you are looking for is hard to find, work with local people in order to develop it.

In terms of more generic equal opportunities issues, you should also ask the following questions and consider how you would monitor the quality and content of what you teach.

- Are curricular materials reviewed regularly in order to ensure that they reflect the culturally-diverse nature of British society?
- Does what you teach provide opportunities for learners to be able to recognise and develop skills that detect stereotyping, bias and scape-goating?
- Does what you teach provide a global view for analysis of local and national events?
- Does what you teach relate to learners' own experiences and realities?
- Does what you teach challenge racist, sexist, homophobic and disablist attitudes and behaviour that can perpetuate discrimination and inequality?
- Does the curriculum encourage a critical approach to the subject matter under consideration?
- Does the curriculum recognise and draw upon the experience, knowledge, religious beliefs and customs in addition to the language skills of students/ learners?

"The project also fostered good relationships between a number of organisations and enabled LARCAA to realise the second aim of its project, to develop good relations between two very different communities; white people in the poor wards of the northern part of Liverpool and black people in the poor southern wards."
(James Hernandez, Liverpool Anti-Racist and Community Arts Association Project Co-ordinator)


"Learning at the Elimu provides a challenge to the negative experiences that so many black youngsters have had. Students achieve initial training for classroom assistants at NVQ level in 2 stages on a 30-week programme."
(Dr Osama Rahim, Classroom Assistant Project Co-ordinator)

"Excellent course, I feel I can apply what I've learnt in my role as a project worker involved with young people excluded from school. This knowledge has been truly empowering."
(Black adult learner, Advocacy Skills for Parents)

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9 Strategies for sustainability

The term sustainability has within it a set of assumptions that are not always true. There is an assumption that, at the end of a period of financial support, through a grant for example, a fully-implemented programme will be firmly in place. It is often assumed that it will then require less effort and fewer resources. These assumptions are clearly overly optimistic. In reality if a project or service is to continue to run, the question of how to continue to support it still remains.

Within the community sector initiatives are notoriously difficult to sustain. Sustainability often has little to do with how well a service performs. It may be that a source of funding for a much-needed and successful project has dried up and that there is no immediate replacement for it.

It is often the case that an ACL provider can only sustain a project or service through grants, either locally from an LEA or a regional Learning and Skills Council (LSC), or from a large grant-giving charity such as the National Lottery. Some regions will have special funds designed to support training and employment initiatives such as European Social Fund (ESF), Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) or Neighbourhood Renewal Funds (NRF). But when the money is gone, it's gone! So what do you do?

Unsustainable?

"We had a great project which was designed to empower local black people through building up their capacity to understand how things are structured, both in the community and in the city council. We planned to work with a range of community sector organisations to teach about funding, government initiatives, formal meetings and training opportunities. We succeeded in getting funding for the project and enlisted the support of a range of partners. The problem was that all of our contribution was in-kind and it was going to take up to 6 months before the cash funding came through. We had no choice but to inform the European Social Fund that we would not be using their money as we were not running the project."
(Project Development Officer)

"Because the people who benefited from our project were to be employed in the public sector we could not secure national lottery or ESF funds. So how will Estelle Morris's 20,000 Classroom Assistants be trained, through LEAs? There is a problem here – LEAs will not be able to attract black learners and the imbalances will remain the same. We can't sustain our classroom assistant project and this is despite the fact that 88% of our students have gone on to work in local schools. The LEA offered us £2,000 to run our course. This is not enough. We want to be able to offer childcare, support with travel and food, mentoring and intensive guidance in basic skills, ESOL etc – we're talking about the most disadvantaged, and the most needy! There is no way to sustain the project so, we have to change our direction."
(Coordinator for Classroom Assistant Project)

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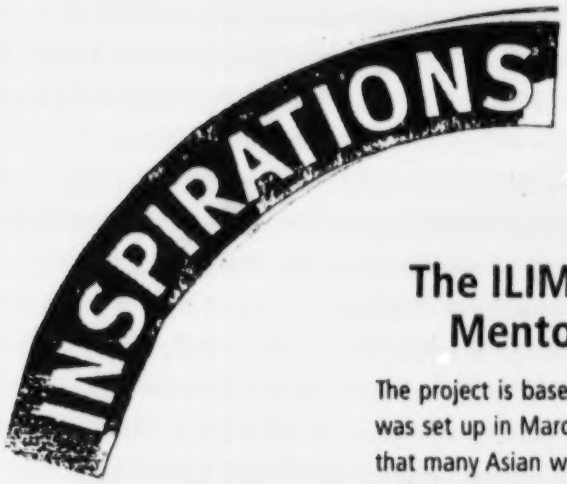
Sustained?

"My personal background is in music and for the last 15 years I've been involved in media production. My company coordinates a number of projects in Manchester. We teach video production and editing, working with young adults and filmmakers. We concentrate on Moss Side and Hulme, and we mainly work with people of African Caribbean origin. Our broad remit is to work with local communities. I head up a charity called First Cut Media Performing Arts Group.

Funding is always a problem. We work in partnership with the local adult education centre, through the City council so we have no overheads. This is a good thing, as we don't have to worry about rates, council tax and such like. Granada TV has funded us for the last six years and this is a boost to our services. We had a little bit of money from Europe recently too; we are currently applying for lottery funding. We survive because we do not pay overheads.

We like to have a free hand in what we do, so we don't jump through hoops just to satisfy funding criteria, we stick to our principles. We have been around for 12 years, we have done 14 local community video productions. Our work has shown in festivals. We do local presentations, some work in schools and we cover the Carnival every year. I've been here for 12 years and I'm staying, but funding is a real problem".
(Director of media project – Manchester)



The ILIM Project (Asian Women's Mentoring Project) Bradford

The project is based at Westbourne Primary School in Bradford and was set up in March 1999. Local survey evidence had demonstrated that many Asian women (some who had lived in the UK for lengthy period and others who had recently arrived) were not taking full advantage of local learning opportunities.

The project aimed specifically to reach these women by training them to become volunteer community mentors. They would in turn inform other local Asian women about the learning opportunities available and support them to access provision.

During 1999 15 women from the Asian community took part in intensive mentor training. They learned mentoring skills and about local education provision, how to access it, who delivers it and where it was delivered. They soon received Open College Certificates to mark their achievement.

The women feel that the project has:

- Improved their confidence generally and their parenting skills
- Revitalised their interest in learning
- Given them inspiration and raised their aspirations in getting involved in learning at different levels
- Raised their awareness of learning opportunities available to them in their local community.

"We are moving into social entrepreneurship, we have private sponsors and we generate income. We have also recently moved into schools through our soccer initiatives programme."
(Alison Lovegrove, LA Raiders Soccer Academy Treasurer)

"It would cost you £500 in the private sector to buy the kind of training we're offering. If you look at who's providing courses for the young and unemployed then we're putting most government-run organisations to shame. We're a bunch of musicians with degrees – but I'd challenge anyone to produce the results we have on the budget we've got."
(Tony Thomas, Beat Dis Project Leader)

"Funding under the LSC now is slightly more flexible than it was under FEFC. So be creative as to how you describe what learners want. You can claim units for many things as well as the traditional outcomes. All kinds of activities can be accredited even if they are unconventional – as long as what you are doing is grounded in what people want – if people gain new skill or insight, it's a learning activity. The challenge is to describe it in education-speak. It's about playing the game but keeping centred on the learner."
(Black teacher of adults)

10 Making sure that what you offer is needed

So how can your projects and services be sustained without compromising on their original aims and objectives? This is quite a tricky prospect, particularly if you do not aim to 'chase the funding' – any funding, simply because it is there. What you offer has to be something that is needed, something that will make a difference. And it cannot operate in a vacuum! It has to be linked to a strategic learning plan, such as that produced through Lifelong Learning Partnerships.

This means ensuring a need and making sure that what you offer is joined-up are essential to sustainability. As a learning provider you should consider the following:

- **How does what I intend to provide impact on local and national priorities?** This is a very important question as it is likely to be the single most important factor considered by the panel assessing your application.
- **Who have I consulted with?** While consultation can seem laborious, in the long-run it is the most effective way to achieve good results. What's more it's a government imperative and you should be aware that black people traditionally have been least likely to be consulted on issues concerning them. So ensure that community groups, your LEA and any appropriate strategic partnerships are aware of your plans.
- **Are there services from which you can generate an income?** Ultimately the best way to sustain any service is by income generation through consultancy, research, hiring out exhibitions, selling training services and so on. Unfortunately there are few areas in ACL from which income can be generated.

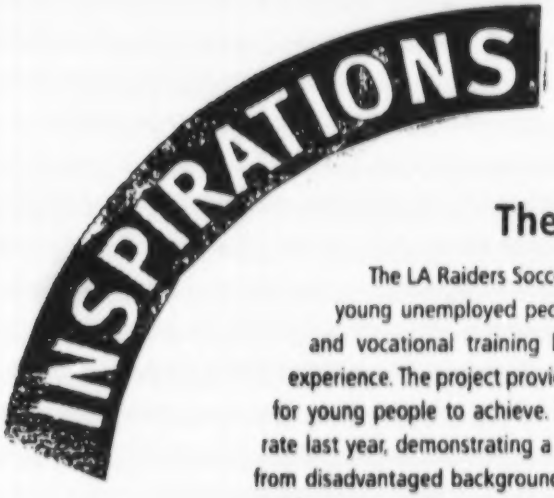
11 Minding the quality and measuring impact

What quality standards can be put into place to support you in establishing the effectiveness of what you are doing? Some important issues arise here in relation to which quality framework to use. Generally speaking, you should use the quality framework set out by your institution. If these do not include performance indicators (PIs), targets, methods of evaluation vis-à-vis race equality, then challenge the framework, or at least adapt it so that you are able to operate in accordance with non-negotiable frameworks, such as the common inspection framework. At the same time, you should ensure that what you do reflects the values, standards and ethos of your service.

All major Government departments and bodies responsible for adult education (such as DfES, LSC, and LEAs) will have set PIs with regard to race; similarly with major charities and European funding bodies. The Commission for Race Equality has developed a charter around PIs for race and there is a legal expectation, as per the Race Relations Amendment Act, that your measure of quality will be set against standards for race equality. (CRE, *Learning for All*)

The softer outcomes of your service will be more difficult to measure. How do you assess community and individual capacity-building and the impact that your project/course has had on the learner? This is difficult if what you are providing is not accredited. It is very difficult to measure soft outcomes in any scientific way. Many believe that if it is possible, then such a measurement is inappropriate. Unfortunately there is still an argument to be continued in this area as funding is increasingly linked to hard outputs measured in terms of qualifications, training and employment opportunities.

But you can illustrate the success of what you have done through case studies and recording the voices, perceptions and views of learners, and in so doing demonstrate the significance of 'raised levels of confidence', 'greater awareness' and 'fuller participation'.



The LA Raiders

The LA Raiders Soccer Academy focuses on re-engaging young unemployed people with a programme of educational and vocational training balanced with sports studies and work experience. The project provides a structured and supported environment for young people to achieve. Students achieved a 95 per cent attendance rate last year, demonstrating a commitment to the project. All students come from disadvantaged backgrounds and very few of them have achieved formal qualifications – in fact many have problems with reading and writing with few if any real employment opportunities. The majority (more than 80 per cent) of students are either black or from minority groups.

Students join the LA Raiders to study for a range of qualifications to enable them to take up careers as sports coaches. The NVQ compliments the FA qualifications and as a package together they provide a comprehensive stepping-stone for employability and entrepreneurship.

After an intensive course students are ready to become self-employed, and a significant number of them set up their own businesses.

Beat Dis

From offices and studios rented from The Tabernacle, a lottery-funded arts centre in Notting Hill London, Beat Dis has started training people from the local black community as programme editors, sound mixers, journalists, presenters, administrators - whatever they want to be. The training is hands-on and real opportunities are created leading to real jobs. The BBC's community radio London Live's partnership in the Beat Dis internet radio project is an important boost.

The community and the trainees are setting the agenda for this station and there are programme slots for local news stories, history, rap music, schools and colleges, and of course the world-famous Notting Hill Carnival. It is the authentic voice of a very diverse and vibrant community and the BBC is keen to tap into it.

12 Sharing a good thing

Photography and video are powerful means of communication, they also serve as documented evidence of what you have done and can be part of the process of evaluation – share this! Take advantage of the local press, invite them to your centre and let people see what you're doing. This evidence can also serve to:

- Attract funding and lead to sustainability
- Enable the development of new skills for your learners.

Celebrate your achievements

This provides a further opportunity to let people know what you are doing, have an open event and make it fun! Think about the venue that you use and look at ways to involve people from black and minority communities.

Build dissemination strategies into your applications for funding and take the opportunity to produce end of course reports as these can stimulate interest from both potential beneficiaries and sponsors.

What happens to your learners?

It may be difficult to measure the impact that your particular initiative has had on the development of a learner, but enabling learners to talk about their experiences whilst they are with you is a good indication of whether they have enjoyed what you have offered, how much they have learned and how what they have learned has affected their aspirations. So make sure that you keep records of learners, including:

- what they have studied,
- their family background
- what happens to them when they leave you.

Again, this is good evidence for potential funders and statistical information on completion rates and satisfaction is powerful evidence of the value of your services. You should also think about:

- Liaising with other service providers in order to map out the destinations of learners
- Try to identify progression routes for learners – this will require a good knowledge of what is available and an insight into the individual needs of black learners.
- Encourage your learners to come back and tell their stories – this is a particularly powerful way of motivating others, particularly if there are few learners who are black or from minority groups in the service area that you are concentrating in.
- Highlight achievement through inspirational stories. Each black learner is an inspiration to us all Share this inspiration with others: it will stimulate great interest.

13 Check it out

Good practice

- starts with finding out what adult and community learning opportunities are currently available to learners
- involves being aware of the issues that many black people face in Britain in terms of racism, discrimination, poverty and social exclusion
- means being, or becoming, familiar with issues faced by many black people in mainstream schools, and building on this to enable learners to realise their full potential
- enables black people to define themselves in ways that they think are appropriate
- promotes equality and cultural diversity, particularly with regard to race, and challenges all forms of discrimination and oppression in behaviour, policy and curriculum matters
- seeks to develop an inclusive curriculum that celebrates diversity and the contribution that all people have made to world development
- engenders a critical awareness for both the practitioner and the learner
- encourages partnerships between local people, ACL providers and strategic and funding bodies
- necessitates an awareness of local and national learning strategies and where what you are delivering fits in
- seeks to provide ACL services from accessible centres, within black communities if possible
- provides added value such as child care and travel expenses in order to remove barriers to participation
- means establishing, in conjunction with learners community representatives and other partners, how effective ACL provision is, and whether it meets the needs of local people
- signposts black learners, informing them of education, training and employment opportunities

Glossary

Beneficiaries is a term used by funding bodies such as the European Social Fund. It is used to describe the people who are the recipients of your services.

Black and minority group is used in the main to describe people who are of African and Asian origin, but generally includes people of all 'visible' minorities, their visibility being on the basis of skin colour.

City Challenge allocated £37.5m for each of five years to 31 Urban Programme authorities to achieve self-sustaining regeneration of their designated City Challenge areas. It was targeted at specific areas, time-limited, output-driven and based upon partnership. Round 1 started in April 1991.

Colour prejudice, more often described as racism, is to hold a set of assumptions about another, usually erroneous and negative, on the basis of their colour.

Community Relations Councils (CRCs) are regionally based and advise on all issues pertaining to race relations' legislation and issues of race and cultural diversity.

Cultural diversity Britain is one of the most culturally diverse places in the world. This is reflected in the wealth of linguistic, cultural and religious groups who live here.

Disablist is a term applied to discriminatory and prejudicial attitudes and behaviour towards people who are disabled.

Discrimination is often related to denying someone access to a scare resource, and therefore power. Discriminatory action is based on prejudice and can be used to deny access to a job, training opportunity, housing or education.

Economic recession describes the process where by an area or community goes into decline due to changes in the economy that lead to unemployment and lack of training opportunities. This can also happen on a nation and worldwide scale.

Education and Lifelong Learning Officers are usually based in city or borough council education departments and are responsible for the management and co-ordination of education and lifelong learning services.

Ethnic relates to people or groups that share a culture, religion or language. In practice this term is rarely used to describe majority groups, and many people from minority groups find it offensive due to its negative synonyms such as heathenism and animism.

Eurocentricism is a system of beliefs that operates from a European viewpoint or set of values. So a curriculum, history, political discussion can be said to be Eurocentric in its assumptions about the nature of the world.

European Social Fund is revenue funding under the Objective One programme to provide time-limited support to projects that meet stated criteria and can provide matched funding

Genuine Occupational Qualification (GOQ) is allowable under the Race Relations Act and enables an employer, under certain circumstances, to advertise a job or training opportunity to members of a specified cultural, religious or language group.

Hard output is a measurable end result of a service usually identified as a qualification, a completed training course or an employment opportunity.

Imam is the religious leader of a Mosque, equivalent to a Priest/Rabbi/Pastor/ Minister.

Joined-up means working strategically, in partnership with other appropriate bodies and in accordance with appropriate plans and initiatives.

Lifelong Learning Partnerships (LLPs) promote lifelong learning opportunities. They are usually part of a broader Local Strategic Partnership and ensure that lifelong learning issues are central to discussions about regeneration, individual development, capacity building, and so on.

Lifelong Learning Plans have to be produced by all Local Education Authorities. They set out an LEA's priorities, strategy and spending for learning opportunities in any given area of the country. In order to secure Learning and Skills Council funding an LEA must have a Lifelong Learning Plan.

Neighbourhood Renewal describes the government initiative to narrow the gap between the most socially deprived and other areas to ensure that within the next 10-20 years that no one is seriously disadvantaged by where they live.

New Deal for Communities is a key programme in the Government's strategy to tackle multiple deprivation in the most deprived neighbourhoods in the country, giving some of our poorest communities the resources to tackle their problems in an intensive and co-ordinated way.

Performance Indicators (PIs) are measures of how well your service is functioning. They are measurable outputs that indicate that you have reached set targets as per the various plans governing the operation of your services.

Positive action means action permitted by the Race Relations Act 1976 that allows a person to provide facilities to meet the special needs of people from particular racial groups in relation to their training, education or welfare (section 35).

Prejudice is to pre-judge someone on the basis of a set of (usually erroneous beliefs) that one person or group has in relation to another person or group. The basis for prejudice can be skin colour, gender, age, class and others.

Public authority describes public sector services such as local authorities. In law, such as race relations legislation, they are charged with certain legal responsibilities, such as promoting racial harmony.

Quality frameworks, usually linked to an inspection framework, are made up of measures that set the standards for service delivery. Such frameworks should include equality standards relating to engagement and levels of achievement of hard to reach groups.

Race Relations denotes the quality of interactions, communications and general relationships between people who are white and people from black and minority groups.

Racism is a dislike and discrimination towards another usually based on skin colour. Nationality and religion can also be the basis of racism.

Soft outcomes are the end product of a service that you have provided, they are not easily quantifiable or open to rigorous scrutiny and are 'soft' for this reason.

Single Regeneration Budget provides funding for partnerships of local stake-

holders, usually led by a local authority, to regenerate deprived areas. The programme was set up to bring funding programmes from several government departments into one pot. There are some 600 SRB partnerships running over 9,000 schemes.

Sustainability is an ability to further develop and keep going a service, project or initiative.

Task Forces were set up by Government from the early 1980s in order to lend financial support to the economic regeneration of run-down city areas.

Further reading and resources

Reading

1. The Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain – The Parekh Report 2000.
2. The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry – HMSO 1999
3. Outcast England: How Schools Exclude Black Children (1994) Introduction by A. Sivanandan.
4. Open Talk, Open Minds: Anti-racist education for young people. Exercises for youth workers tackling racism, prejudice and stereotyping among young people. (1999), CRE

Resources

1. Raising the Attainment of Minority Ethnic Pupils, OFSTED 1999
2. Colour Blind: A Practical Guide To Teaching Black Adult Learners (2001) Alyson Malach, NIACE
3. Working With Black Adult Learners, A Practical Guide (1993) Stella Dadzie, NIACE
4. The Race Relations Act (1976), Race Relations Amendment Act (2000)

Useful contacts and networks

Butetown History & Arts Centre
5 Dock Chambers
Bute Street
Cardiff CF10 5AG
Tel: 029 20256757
e-mail: info@bhac.org

CASBAH Project
Institute of Commonwealth Studies
28 Russell Square
London WC1B 5DS
Tel: 020 7862 8824
e-mail: casbah@sas.ac.uk

Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations
University of Warwick
Coventry CV4 7AL
General Tel: 024 7652 4869
Resources Centre Tel: 024 7652 3605
www.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/CRER_RC/

Commission for Racial Equality (CRE)
Elliot House
10-12 Arlington Street
London SW1E 5EH
Tel: 020 7828 7022
www.cre.gov.uk

Equal Opportunities Commission
Arndale House
Arndale Centre
Manchester M4 3QE
Tel: 0161 833 9244
e-mail info@eoc.org.uk
www.eocni.org.uk

Institute of Race Relations
2-6 Leeke Street
King's Cross Road
London WC1X 9HS
Tel: 020 7833 2010
e-mail: info@irr.org.uk

NIACE
21 De Montfort Street
Leicester LE1 7GE
Tel: 0116 204 4200
www.niace.org.uk

The Runnymede Trust
Suite 106
The London Fruit & Wool Exchange
Brushfield Street
London E1 6EP
Tel: 020 7377 9222
Fax: 020 7377 6622
e-mail: info@trt.demon.co.uk

Useful websites

1. www.raceforopportunity.org.uk – Race For Opportunity
2. www.communities.org.uk – Communities Online
3. www.regeneration-uk.com – Regeneration UK
4. www.liberty-human-rights.org.uk – Liberty
5. www.channel4.com/blackhistorymap/ – Black and Asian History Map
6. www.teacherworld.org.uk/ – Teacher World
7. www.niace.org.uk – National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE)
8. www.dtlr.org.uk – Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions
9. www.hombeats.com – Online Resources (Homebeats)
10. www.lga.gov.uk – Local Government Association
11. www.lsc.gov.uk – Learning and Skills Council
12. www.homeoffice.gov.uk/reu/reu.htm – Race Equality Unit
13. www.blacknet.co.uk – Black Net

Lifelines 4

Engaging black learners in adult and community education

Lenford White

Demonstrating the importance of adult and community learning in challenging racism and promoting cultural diversity, this guide sets out how education providers can make their learning programmes relevant, challenging and appropriate to adult learners from black and minority groups.

Case studies illustrate models of effective and innovative practice, with quotes from practitioners and learners who have been involved in projects. Highlighting problems that practitioners often have in managing projects and the constant search for funding, the guide also examines strategies for sustainability.

With checklists, ideas for further follow-up work and useful contact addresses, this guide will provide practitioners with an understanding and confidence to engage more successfully with black learners.

NIACE lifelines in adult learning

The *NIACE lifelines in adult learning* series provides straightforward background and information, accessible know-how and useful examples of good practice for all practitioners involved in adult and community learning. Focusing in turn on different areas of adult learning these guides are an essential part of every practitioner's toolkit.

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3. **Managing community projects for change** – Jan Eldred, ISBN 1 86201 141 9
4. **Engaging black learners in adult and community education** – Lenford White, ISBN 1 86201 142 7

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